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## IN DEFENSE OF THE NON-VOTER

By Frank Chodorov

Ever since the sex-qualification was lifted from the Constitution, the number of Americans who do not exercise the prerogative of citizenship has been in excess of those who do. This would indicate that women put less worth on the ballot than do men, were it not that ballot-booth absenteeism is a masculine habit of old. Long before the Nineteenth Amendment was enacted, the business of "getting out the vote" enlivened campaigns. The addition of women to the electorate merely increased the overall figures and made the absentee totals more glaring.

On the basis of past experience, one can predict that next fall, after the political conventions shall have completed their chores, the country will again be treated to a steady drone of written and oral sermons on the shortcomings of the non-voter, swelling in intensity of invective as we get nearer the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Whoever fails to make a choice of candidates -- even for the "lesser of two evils" -- will be denounced as lacking in both patriotism and a proper respect for the Divinity from Whom the right of suffrage derives. And, if once again the majority of qualified voters are not moved to take part in the election, the suggestion of punitive action will be reiterated.

This is silly. If it is impossible to indict a whole nation, it is equally fatuous for a minority to condemn a majority. We can well appreciate the concern of the professional politician in the matter, for he is in need of a "mandate" to justify his career, and the larger his vote the greater his moral security. Even Stalin finds it helpful on occasion to compel a hundred percent sanction of his skullduggery. But, by what democratic principle may the minority condemn the majority? Perhaps the abstention is in itself an intelligent exercise of choice; they have voted -- against; and since they are in the majority they are democratically in the right. (It would be more consistent with principle for the candidate elected by a minority to refuse to take office.)

II

Possibly, though statistical proof is lacking, the majority of

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Americans do not vote because they are not interested in the wares offered. To be sure, a great many would not vote under any circumstances, because of inertia, apathy, or sheer inability to comprehend what it is all about; these can be written off as of no consequence, and perhaps the country is better off that they take no part in its public affairs. But, among the non-voters there are undoubtedly a large number whose integrity impels them to reject what the political parties have to offer; they see no point in replacing one set of rascals by another, and will not under any circumstances underwrite rascality. They are not signing blank checks.

To cast aspersions on these self-respecting and intelligent citizens is to put a premium on lack of intelligence and lack of self-respect. Certainly, those who abstain from voting on principle display a higher type of citizenship than do those whose votes are cast by their pocketbooks: payrollers and their families, subsidized farmers, government contractors, borrowers from the RFC, or other expectant recipients of favors. Rather than condemn the conscientious non-voter, it would be more appropriate that we disfranchise all who are in any way beholden for their livelihood to the tax fund.

Such disfranchisement, by the way, even though it depleted the polling list, would go a long way toward cleaning up American politics; it would abolish government by pressure groups and give solid meaning to our election results. The way things are going, it is not unlikely that in time only those who stand to profit by the election of this or that man, this or that party, will go to the polls, and absenteeism on the part of all others will be taken for granted. (Unless, indeed, the policy of forced voting is introduced.)

III

Between 1940 and 1950 the population of the country increased by over 14 per cent. Yet, the total vote cast in the 1948 presidential election was nearly 6 per cent less than it was in 1940. If, as seems likely, the number of qualified voters kept pace with the population increase, there were approximately 7 million more of them at the time of the last election than when Mr. Roosevelt was accorded his third term. Yet, there were 3 million less votes cast. In eight years, enrollment in the legion of non-voters jumped by about 10 million.

Political analysts offer various explanations for this phenomenon. The lusterless personalities offered for the presidency -- what choice was there between Mr. Dewey and Mr. Truman? -- is one explanation. Another is that Mr. Dewey made a poor fight of it; he did not bring out the

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Republican vote. Such explanations, however, do no credit to the intelligence and integrity of that large segment of the electorate who washed their hands of the election because in point of policy both candidates were agreed. Why bother?

In theory, at any rate, we vote not only for men but also for the program they promise to carry out. Experience has taught us that political promise and political performance are often unrelated; the post-election repudiation of his platform by Mr. Roosevelt is a prime example of such perfidy. Nevertheless, the presumption of our election system is that the citizen is capable of making a choice as to policy in public affairs, and votes accordingly. If, however, the candidates offer him no choice, if they are in agreement as to policy, then there is no better reason for voting than that one affects a mustache and the other is clean-shaven. Under the circumstances, the citizen who does not vote is more discriminating than the one who does.

In the last four elections, all the candidates and all the parties have unanimously advocated a policy of Statism: more government intervention in social affairs, greater contraction of the area of personal liberty. Nothing else was offered. Since, as the figures prove, abstention from voting has increased during these sixteen years, it must be assumed that this lack of choice was a factor of some importance.

We can never know whether the citizenry as a whole, or even a majority, is ready for complete Statism, or is willing to accept larger doses of it, unless the issue is clearly put before them. It is time this were done. The professional politicians may be wrong in assuming that the American citizen has given up on personal liberty entirely, that he wants all the paternalism that is to be had. The abstention figures would indicate that these politicians are wrong.

IV

Next year the country goes to the polls again, and whether the tendency to stay away will increase or decrease is in the hands of those who are formulating the choices to be offered to the citizenry. The party leaders have the matter entirely in their hands.

To be exact, the Republican Party alone carries the burden. The Democratic Party surely will not offer the dissidents the kind of program that will elicit their suffrage. Why should it? For twenty years that Party has been doing right well for itself with the political merchandise it has been selling. Some new frills will be added to its sample case, like socialized medicine, federal control of education, perhaps a plan for permanent regulation of prices and wages. The display will have the old Democratic motif: bigger and better interventions.

Consistency, as well as sagacity, directs the Democratic Party to

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offer nothing else. Whether by design or the accidents of political opportunism, that Party is now committed to what in Europe is called National Socialism, and in justice to those citizens who prefer a regime of that kind it ought not change its policy. The incongruity of its claiming Thomas Jefferson as its philosophic godfather can be dismissed as a trick of the trade; a switch in allegiance to Norman Thomas, or even Karl Marx, might be more honest intellectually, but it would be fatal politically. Nor should we go too hard on the Democratic Party for leading us into a regime of absolutism, like Communism or Fascism, since that is in the future, and a political party is concerned only with what living voters will vote for.

In the last four elections the Republican Party has stupidly and slavishly imitated its competitor. The best it offered the trade is the promise of more efficient collectivism. To the knowledgeable voter this was an insult, because he knows that efficient collectivism is less desirable than the hit-or-miss kind; Hitler was more efficient than Roosevelt, and Stalin is a genius compared to Truman. The conscientious non-voter was not drawn out of his shell by that promise. However, it was apparent that the Republican Party was not interested in him at all, but was trying to capture the opposition's proper clientele. In that they were doomed to fail, for those buyers had no reason to switch from an experienced and established firm to a johnny-come-lately.

The results of the last four elections should be proof enough that the Republican Party cannot corral the customers of collectivism, and, unless they offer something quite the opposite, they cannot activate the non-voters. Many who voted Republican did so with the fond hope that its pusillanimous candidates would, if elected, slow up the collectivistic trend. But, if the Party comes up with another me-too platform (and candidates), it is a certainty that they will drive many of these hopeful voters into the camp of the abstainers.

The only hope of the Party, it would seem, is to polish up an out-and-out program for limited government, spelled out in such detail that the cautious non-voter cannot doubt its meaning.

Will the Party win with that kind of program? Who knows? It had better try. If the customers for limited government are too few in number to elect the candidate sponsoring it, then we shall know for sure that the country is quite ripe for a monolithic government system and a full dose of socialism. In that case, the Republican Party should disband before it is liquidated.

In that case, too, non-voting will increase. It will be the only way of expressing dissidence. It will be civil disobedience by the disinherited. It will be revolution.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 40

By Frank C. Hanighen October 3, 1951

STATES' RIGHTS: The struggle for states' rights as against Federal Government domination has gone into three stages, in three different localities, during the past week. In our last issue, we reported on the courageous stand made in Indiana; that state's insistence on removing relief cases from the shroud of secrecy imposed by edict of the Federal Government. The tides of battle during the past week may be described as follows:

(1) The State legislature is dead-locked in Indianapolis. Timorous farm organizations have urged a compromise with Washington.

(2) In Gatlinburg, Tenn., yesterday a dramatic clash between State Governors (in convention there) and Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing took place. The latter warned that Indiana has "irretrievably" lost grants of Federal funds for relief. But Governor James F. Byrnes of South Carolina defied Ewing and got a resolution passed which sounded as if it came from Indiana. It called upon Congress to take steps to strike out Federal provisions under which relief funds were withheld from states that permit publication of relief rolls.

(3) Senator Jenner of Indiana, in the U.S. Senate, succeeded in getting an amendment to the tax bill which would achieve the same end as that envisaged by the resolution at Gatlinburg. This amendment -- which received no publicity -- is at this date in the hands of the Senate and House conferees.

It is obvious that the Federal Government is striving desperately to retain this area of its power. It is moving to crush the Indiana revolt, if possible, lest such rebellion spread. If the revolt seems too strong, Ewing (placed very much on the defensive at Gatlinburg) will try to compromise, to avoid a show-down on basic issues. This is the same technique utilized by the Treasury against Vivien Kellems of Connecticut in her legal moves against the withholding tax. The next few weeks may tell which course the Federal Government will follow.

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MCCARRAN COMMITTEE: The Internal Security Committee of the Senate on October 1 produced their most striking revelation so far, when they subpoened and heard Harold K. Stassen. The latter is usually classified as a "liberal". But the former Governor of Minnesota, far from seeking to shield the State Department and Professor Lattimore, gave forthright testimony that in his presence Lattimore had advocated a pro-Communist policy in China. He also gave testimony damaging to Ambassador Philip Jessup, whose appointment to represent the U.S. at the United Nations is now before the Senate. The cause of Senator McCarthy, who has been accusing Lattimore and Jessup of pro-Communism, will be substantially advanced by Stassen's statements.

What Stassen had to say was all the more impressive for its simplicity and lack of rancor, and because the Committee Counsel, Mr. Robert Morris, elicited it without much questioning. Even in this town, chronically suspicious of political motives behind anything a public figure says, no one has been able to attribute such promptings to Governor Stassen in this testimony. He simply told, rather sadly, the story of how he had sought to save our position in Asia; how he went to Jessup, to the secret conference in the State Department, to Senator Connally and received nothing but "brushoffs". The documentation -- his notes and papers of that time -- added great authority to his presentation.

Finally, this hearing adds prestige to the work of the McCarran Committee, its members and staff. It weathered the attack of several weeks ago by Wallace and the pro-Administration press -- a maneuver designed to kill off or curtail funds badly

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needed by this Congressional investigation group. The Wallace affair became so confused by contradictory statements that the scheme fizzled. And the Committee received $117,000 for expenses, about twice what it was given last January. Its success this week offers promise that it will not only write but make history, as the House Un-American Activities Committee did in 1948 in the case of Hiss.

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EISENHOWER: The sagging of the Eisenhower boom coincides with rising doubts, among those who have favored the General "because he can win", that the General could make a real fight against the Administration. Some stress that Ike is too beholden to the Democrats who "made him" and mention such favors as the Treasury ruling on his author's rights. That ruling netted Ike a small fortune and might make him indisposed to go all-out in political attack. Others gossip that the Administration hatchet-men already have amassed much unsavory material for a smear campaign; and claim that Truman has hinted as much privately. If Eisenhower's boom should rise again, the General would also be beholden to the choir of pro-Administration columnists and radio commentators who have contributed so much to the boom.

All things considered, the hope that Eisenhower as a nominee would make a real slam-bang battle against the Administration during the campaign seems extremely dubious. And, it is asked by GOP politicos -- how can we win otherwise?

The fact is that the Eisenhower Myth -- "the man who won the war" -- has prevented political observers from visualizing Ike as he really is. If they could understand that Eisenhower by character and disposition is no "strong man" nor even a "fighter", their appraisal of his value as a candidate would drop.

We consulted a former officer of the General Staff who had a vantage point from which to watch Eisenhower during the latter part of his career and who has no personal reasons (of promotion, preferment, etc.) to influence his judgment. He says: "The General has always been a charming and attractive man. To meet him is to like him at once. However, he was not a good General, nor a real fighting General such as MacArthur, Patton, Bradley, and others. His whole career shows him to have excelled in the art of 'getting along' with others, of compromising, of giving in to stronger personalities, of simply taking orders from better men. He really had no concept of how to run a campaign.

"When all the military strategists had urged that the coup de grace must be given the enemy in the North German plain, Eisenhower proposed to the Pentagon that the blow be struck in the South. This irritated Marshall, who sent a message to Eisenhower which I clearly remember. It ran somewhat as follows: 'Be bold, General! Grant would never have defeated Lee by such feeble strategy as you propose.' Eisenhower meekly submitted to Marshall who, as a matter of fact, really ran that campaign by remote control from the Pentagon."

Such a picture hardly suggests qualities which would enable a candidate to wage a strong, fighting political campaign.

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EUROPEAN REARMAMENT: What is the truth about progress in creating a European Army?

Groups of gentlemen from Congress journey to Paris, bask in the irresistable charm of Ike and return with happy, but undetailed tidings. Reporters dutifully cable sanguine orations by the General. Editorial writers spin daily leaders based on the assumption that all is going well. "Every day in every way, etc." But you can't live and learn on a diet of Coué.

The fact is that -- as disgusted Pentagon folks will admit -- the European Army is so far largely a "delaying force" and not fit to win the battle of Europe if the Russians choose to move West. And, as these military folk reluctantly concede, it

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can't go well without full-fledged German participation. General Alfred Gruenther, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, blurted out the truth to one group of Congressional visitors in somewhat this vein: "Without Germany, we can do very little."

And what of Germany? Mr. McCloy may desire to reach a quick agreement with German Chancellor Adenauer. But, if so, it is clear that the British and French will not endorse terms sufficiently liberal to attract the Chancellor. For Adenauer must win terms as good or better than Schumacher, the leader of the increasingly tough opposition Socialists, will endorse. You can put it in your book that Schumacher is always ready to raise the ante. Party politics -- fed by the discontent of the people -- may prevent any settlement for a long time to come.

Nor is that all. Chancellor Adenauer has to heed the Right-wing Free Democratic Party, which expresses the will of the Ruhr industrialists. These elements, we learn on good authority, have told Adenauer that they will cooperate in helping arm the West only if all the coal and steel restrictions on Germany are removed. The French presumably would block this, for they want export of German coke to Lorraine at the low price presently fixed by the Allied High Commission in Germany.

In short, the Germans have adopted a slogan not exclusively the patent of Germany -- "Cooperation in rearmament, but on the basis of business as usual".

Last summer, we met one of these "business-as-usual" emissaries, a prominent German industrialist on tour in this country. He was brought over by the U.S. Government to inspect our heavy industry -- probably on the theory that the spectacle of our plant production would so impress him that he would then return home with wonder tales, with the result that German rearmament would be spurred.

The German's travels had a quite different effect. His line was that it would be dangerous to have Western Germany develop its arms industry; for then the Russians would be inspired to move West and seize it. A rather persuasive argument. But it was not difficult to perceive his motive: A Germany freed from armament burdens could develop her peace-time goods industry, export and regain her former thriving trade. Yes, the Germans have caught the disease of "business-as-usual" from Britain and France.

In view of this picture, the best experts on Germany whom we know predict that negotiations for commencement of German rearmament will go on for at least six months -- and maybe for years. The prospect for a real European army is bleak.

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TRUMAN AND/OR PERON: Commenting on the eruption in Argentina last week, the Wall Street Journal points out that there is much discontent over economic conditions. The worker complains "about the rising cost of flour in a country whose No. 1 product has been wheat. He bewails the scarcity of beef in a traditionally beef-raising country."

In an adjoining column, the publication reports that in this country the Studebaker Corporation is receiving regular shipments of steel from Belgium, and that the National Production Authority has had to let down its bars against the use of imported steel. In production of steel, we believe, the United States has been No. 1 in the world.

All this goes to show that, whether the government is described as democratic or fascistic, headed by Truman or Peron, whenever it enters the economic field it does nothing but create shortages. For further proof, we might mention that Socialistic England, under Attlee, has created a shortage of coal in a country which at one time was the world's coal producer.

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OBIT FOR A CONGRESSMAN: When members of Congress pass on, stiff obituaries in the papers give slight inkling of the real circumstances. We believe that in many cases the end is hastened by overwork and discouragement. This long and turbulent session

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has aggravated these causes. (Seven House members have died since January.) The death yesterday of Karl Stefan, according to friends, was in no small measure the result of excessive labors and a feeling he was waging a hopeless fight.

Stefan represented the Third District of Nebraska. That is an area reminiscent of the early prairie communities so beautifully described by Willa Cather in her novels about Nebraska. The Congressman typified the friendliness, the sturdy individualism and hatred of war and dictatorship which characterizes the folk out there. Like many of Miss Cather's characters, Stefan came to the prairies from his native Bohemia.

Although of Czech race, Stefan felt no bitterness toward the German people under Hitler and in 1948 did his bit for healing the scars of war. In that year, he journeyed to the Rhineland where he presented a gift of relief money from a town in mid-Nebraska to a German town. A stout fighter against centralized government, Stefan was tireless in his efforts to curtail the veritable flood of dangerous requests for funds from Congress to expand collectivist power. Although discouraged by failure to stem this all-powerful tide, he never flinched. Ave atque vale!

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EDUCATION: To overcome the shortage of trained stenographers, E. I. DuPont de Nemours and Co., Inc., Wilmington, Delaware, has set up an "earn while you learn" program. High school girls from the vicinity are hired to work half days, and to go to school half days. In addition to the functional subjects, the course of learning includes grammar, punctuation and spelling, subjects which, before the days of "progressive" education, the high school graduate was presumed to have mastered. This reminds us of an office manager who found it necessary to teach the alphabet to a high school graduate he had hired, so that she could file properly.

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REVISIONISM: Reference above in the column to the "Eisenhower Myth" suggests that a real debunking of military history of the past war is in order. Revisionist literature published since 1945 has dealt mainly with the diplomatic and political history. But the necessity of Revisionism on all planes is increasingly evident. In a review published in the American Bar Association Journal, July, 1951, Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes succinctly describes the need for Revisionism:

"A new movement of Revisionism is now under way in the United States, and several remarkable books have appeared which challenge the official propaganda that governed our views on war responsibility in the years following Pearl Harbor. The earliest to be published were George Morgenstern's Pearl Harbor: The Story of the Secret War; and Charles Austin Beard's American Foreign Policy in the Making and President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War, 1941. . . .

"Revisionism following 1918 had rough sledding at the outset in the face of an hostile public opinion and historical craft, though it ultimately triumphed handsomely over illusion and mendacity. But Revisionism today faces almost insuperable obstacles. Scholars, no matter how distinguished, are, if they are suspected of Revisionist inclination, denied access to official sources and public documents which are freely opened to 'court historians' and apologists for the foreign policy of President Roosevelt. Pressure is put on publishers of books and periodicals to induce them not to print Revisionist materials. Only three publishers have dared to defy these blackout forces: The Yale University Press, Henry Regnery and Devin-Adair. The Yale Press published Professor Beard's two books. If such materials are published, they are ignored by most journals, periodicals or newspapers and are not reviewed at all. If Revisionist books are reviewed, they are almost invariably smeared in a hostile and contemptuous manner no matter what their merits, rather than being fairly examined and countered by factual argument. Unless these obstacles to truth are overcome, it will be many generations before the public can be as soundly informed about 1939 and 1941 as it was by 1930 with regard to 1914 and 1917."



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European Supplement *to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 40

*The views expressed in this* EUROPEAN SUPPLEMENT *are those of an experienced European observer, and are interesting for that reason, but they do not necessarily reflect the views of HUMAN EVENTS—Editors.*

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*By* BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL Paris — October, 1951

**Operation Rollback:** The internal history of continental Western Europe since liberation displays a striking uniformity. Everywhere the Communists rose to a commanding position as major partners in collectivist coalitions. Then, everywhere they were expelled from governments, dropped from parliamentary majorities, driven to cover.

Nor has the process stopped there. Having broken with the Communists, the Socialists found themselves constituting the leftist branch of anti-Communist majorities—the minority branch. It took time for the majority of the anti-Communist coalition to gain confidence, but as they did, they followed their own inclinations rather than Socialist suggestions. Then the Socialists were faced with the choice of going along or dropping out. In France they hung on for a long time; now the school issue (public support of Catholic institutions) forces them out.

It is worth noting that the continuing shift to the right is facilitated by the hold of the Communists on a large portion of the electorate; these votes are to all intents and purposes nullified. The Communist influence on policy is de-activated and a new political center of gravity is established. Meanwhile, the incapacity of the Socialists to win Communist votes condemns them to a no man's land of political futility.

Coincident with this political process an atmospheric process is to be noted. The psychological climate of Europe is rolled back to 1929. The Great Depression caused a tremendous loss of confidence in existing institutions. It was then that European eyes turned from the United States to Soviet Russia: from America came tales of unemployment, from the U.S.S.R. came tales of building up under the Five Year Plan. Then Schacht's wizardry came up for admiration. Now, on the contrary, the U. S. presents the picture that fascinated Europe before the collapse of Wall Street. American recipes for productivity and social progress are coming back into fashion. As if to round out the symmetry, there begins to be some talk of Erhard's liberal wizardry in Germany, which will militate for economic freedom just as Schacht's success militated for state planning.

There is also a major difference between pre-depression Europe and the Europe of today: we now are faced with a military threat. But Europeans are rapidly growing indifferent or skeptical about this threat. Invasion did not occur last year, nor again this summer. Why should it occur after the building-up of American military strength? Thus a new confidence and a new optimism are being established.

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**The Immobility of Living Standards:** This evolution, favorable almost beyond hope, is not without some inherent dangers. In the social field, there is a distinct danger of complacency. The business community is tempted to sit back and take things easy now that the leftist threat has subsided: a good way to bring it back. It is not enough to point to the social fruits of capitalism in the U. S. if European capitalism bears no such fruits. And it does not. The immobility of living standards is a menace to the regime. It seems the more intolerable because economic success is overstated and its nature misunderstood.



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In France, for example, it is currently said that the working class as a whole is no better off than in 1938 (which is true), even though production has gone up by over 40 per cent. The latter statement is misleading. It misleads both the French workers and American opinion. The figures relate to the industrial index, while gross national product has risen by only 11 per cent. France had to repair huge war damages, a process still going on, and also to make up the lack of investment during the pessimistic thirties; consequently, a far greater fraction of the national product is addressed to investment than was the case in 1938.

Also, France in 1938 did not balance her external payments, even though she then had foreign investments, which have since been lost; she now is concerned with balance and consequently an increased portion of her national product is addressed to exports. The rise in French production has not been a rise in the production of consumer goods; of these little more were produced in 1950 than in 1938, and far less were imported and more were exported; consequently no more were available.

While I am on this subject, let me answer the many American friends who express astonishment that the benefits of Marshall Aid did not trickle down to the workers. It is true that under American aid living standards have risen only slowly (say from 90 per cent of 1938 to 100 per cent). But the country laid waste and bare by war and occupation could only enjoy, in 1946, whatever living standards she had, meanwhile rebuilding equipment at the cost of unrequited imports. These imports, before Marshall Aid, cost a net of 5.2 billion dollars in alienation of capital (gold stock, foreign holdings, etc.) and in foreign indebtedness. The level of imports reached before aid intervened could not have been maintained without this expenditure. Living standards would have sunk, reconstruction would have been slowed down.

It cost a net of 2.4 billion dollars of Marshall Aid to permit the development of this rebuilding process. Compare these 2.4 billions with the 5.2 which had been necessary for a shorter period before 1946.

There is no visible hump in the French economic recovery attributable to American aid: but the reverse would have been quite visible if there had been no aid. Readers should not, of course, take these explanations for an unqualified apology of the manner in which the whole program was conducted: but some criticisms are, in my view, excessive.

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**Operation Forward:** In any case, Europeans now look for some tangible evidences of recovery: things must move up for the common man. How? The trade-unionist approach, backed by the Socialists and the M.R.P., is to raise all wages by a given percentage. Such a plan is now under discussion.

We have a national minimum wage which serves in practice as a basing point for all wages. Theoretically it is a bit more complicated; each industry has its own basing point and all wages within that industry are figured as percentages above it. This method of figuring obtains even though the basing point may be below the compulsory minimum for all industries. The effect of this system is to raise the entire structure of wages whenever the basing point is raised, as it is going to be. So does the whole structure of prices.

It is a noteworthy feature of this rigidity of the wage-structure that employers who wish to raise some workers have to do it in a clandestine manner, for fear of arousing demands for a general percentage increase. Such rigidity is most unfavorable to real betterment.

Among the causes which militate against a true improvement are to be found the legacies of reform or of war. It is true that profits are considerable; but the complete disappearance of stock-market issues and the lamentable scarcity and dearness of credit force businesses to expand solely from retained earnings. Lack of bank credit compels them to reinvest profits.

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A remarkable development in Britain should here be noted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now pleads for profits as the means of capital expansion, and to make profits acceptable, he has clapped a ceiling on dividends. Profits are presumably less unpopular if they don't benefit the stockholder.

Another cause of high prices is the enormous price mark-ups, a legacy from the time of Occupation when profits had to be made from scant sales. The volume of sales has gone up, but the profit margins have not come down. It is a curious feature of French economy that individual businesses, less open to the tax collector's scrutiny, do far better than the big companies.

Mention should be made of the Joyce-Carmody drive to better the condition of the workers in token businesses under the sponsorship of the ECA Wages in these businesses are proportioned to productivity.

I understand that General Eisenhower is now getting interested in the vicious structure of the European economy and proposes to use the integration of procurement for European forces to start up intra-European competition.

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**No War:** In foreign affairs I find an almost general conviction that there will be no war; the United States is getting too strong for Russia, the Soviets are climbing down. Such views are not without distinct advantage. Confidence is what Europeans most lacked. It would be preferable to have a form of confidence resulting from the building-up of local strength, but anything is better than the mood of fearful anticipation. The present attitude is conducive to work and to investments; capital is slowly beginning to ooze back from abroad and gold holdings to melt.

But, based as it is on neglect of a threat still present, the mood is not favorable to an armament effort. This is none the less under way, egged on by the prestige of Eisenhower. But it is an almost secretive affair. The public hears little of it. Newspapers carry next to nothing about SHAPE.

I have often stressed the inadequacy of our press. It is once more exemplified in the treatment of the European Army issue. It is truly advantageous to defense that procurement for all continental armies should be unified, which in turn will work for economic integration. The political structure to be set up does mark a move towards federalism. The first point however has not been dealt with at all, and the second not very much, while dispatches from Washington have insisted on the negative achievement: that there is to be no specifically German army.

The attitude of French officers is very different. They seem to have been fired with hope by their contacts with SHAPE, or by what they have heard of it. They feel that things are really moving; they are extremely grateful to Eisenhower for his success in forcing defense as a major preoccupation upon the minds of political leaders. And it is remarkable that, in the interests of defense, they have become enthusiasts of economic integration.

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**Romantic Philosophy:** The literary event of the summer was the production of a truly giant play by Sartre, called *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu.* The setting is XVIth century Germany; religious strife has caused a breakdown of political order, and the land is delivered to sheer banditry. The hero, Goetz, is one of the many soldiers of fortune who led plundering mobs. Suddenly this hawk turns dove and his sweet preaching creates a little realm of utter meekness, a group holding itself neutral in the swirl of warfare. For no good reason he absents himself from his flock, leaving it unarmed and warned against fighting.

On his return he finds it cut down. This not altogether surprising outcome convinces him that he has done most harm when he was "good". Therefore he determined to be as "bad" as ever he was, in the service of a "good cause"—that of the revolting and murderous peasants. While the play brings out once more the striking talent of the author, it also displays a naivete astonishing in an intellectual leader.

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Sartre can see no middle road between unmitigated sentimentalism and unmitigated ruthlessness. Thesis: it is bad to be a scoundrel. Antithesis: but the gospel of love leads to destruction. Synthesis: I shall be a scoundrel working for good, i.e., the people. In more formal terms, the logic of action implies brutal disregard of ethical values; man being in the world, he must act, and the morality of his action can only be related to his self-chosen goal.

Such views may be profound: they do not seem so to me. Surely it is news to nobody that there is a contradiction between ethical concepts and biological necessity. There is such a thing as morality precisely because we are subject both to the laws of nature and to ethical commands, which do not speak with the same voice. For centuries Prudence has been honored as a major virtue because it is the power to pick the right path. At one time there was a simple optimism which held that the laws of nature and ethical commands are always identical. This however has completely broken down; the universe is not a nursery. Sartre simply goes to the other extreme.

Perhaps the most striking feature of European intellectualism in the XXth century has been a horror of moderation, voiced in the early years by Claudel when he said that the sages of Antiquity were abhorrent to him because they recommended moderation. The most lurid condemnations were hurled at a society which on the whole was more humane than any the world had known. The goodness within it was just not good enough; therefore it was "humbug" which had to be exposed in its shivering nakedness. One should go the whole hog. But, as Sartre demonstrates in his play, this will not work. What then? The bold, cold-eyed steering of an inflexible course "beyond good and evil". It is strange that grown-up writers should come to the conclusion reached by "kid" gangsters. Of course, they are just the nicest people, these writers, but they do disseminate what is in fact a rather silly and quite dangerous romanticism. The inability of intellectuals to think is a menace to civilization.

In his first work Rousseau developed what has been known as the "paradox" that societies perish through increasing disorders of the mind. This concept was received with amusement or indignation, in an age inebriated with intellectual activity, all in the cause of human happiness. It is, however, a moot point whether the great evils of our times have not had as their main factor the effect upon imaginations of thoughts running wild. Certainly nationalism, sovietism, fascism owe far more to riotous thinking than to economic causes.

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**British Elections:** It is generally agreed that the British elections this month will give a clear majority to Conservatives. A Conservative government seems to be desired now by Laborites generally, but especially by Bevanites. By Laborites generally because they feel that they cannot raise the workers' standard of life and fear it will drop further, and would rather this happen under Conservative rule. By Bevanites especially because, while their views are not acceptable to a government in power, they offer a set of formulas very convenient to a party in opposition.

It is perhaps in order to remark that a static overall standard of life serves to enhance strife between groups. Figures published for France by the Monnet bureau go far to explain the worsening of internal relations in that country since 1929. These figures show France did not recover until 1951 the overall availability of consumer goods existing in 1929; therefore, all attempts to better individual or group situations were pursued at the expense of others. But that policy results in an attitude of mutual suspicion, of hostility to the attempts made by the other fellow to better himself. One more reason to favor what we called Operation Forward. But will a Conservative government in England do what a rightist majority in France has as yet shown no signs of doing? Will it overcome the rigidities which stand in the way of an advance all along the social front?

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